

TRIBAL GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION PROCEDURE

IMPLEMENTATION TRAINING

DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL CONSERVATION – DIVISION OF WATER

ALASKA NATIVE HERITAGE CENTER – ATHABASCAN LONG HOUSE

April 19 – 8:30 to 4:30

8:30 WELCOME, HOUSEKEEPING, OBJECTIVE

8:40 OPENING – MICHELLE BONNET, DEC DIRECTOR OF WATER

8:45 INTRODUCTION EXERCISE

9:05 ALASKA'S WASTEWATER PRIMACY AND THE NEED FOR PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

The Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (APDES) program, to issue and monitor wastewater discharge permits within Alaska, includes guidance on "Public Participation in the APDES Process." What does this guidance say, and why is it important?

Sharon Morgan, Water Quality Program Manager

9:20 EPA FUNDING TO SUPPORT DEVELOPING A TRIBAL PARTICIPATION PROCESS

DEC sought and received unique financial support from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to facilitate the development of a public participation process responsive to tribal and agency concerns regarding the wastewater permitting process. What did DEC commit to and create with this funding?

Miriah Twitchell, APDES Local and Tribal Government Coordinator

9:35 BREAK

9:45 LIVING FROM THE LAND AND SEA

Video courtesy of the Alaska Native Heritage Center

10:00 EXAMPLES OF ENGAGEMENT – TIPS FOR WORKING TOGETHER SUCCESSFULLY

Agencies and tribes are both gaining valuable experience from efforts to engage Alaska Natives in regulatory decisions. EPA will discuss experiences engaging Alaska Native communities in National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) permits. A tribal representative that has coordinated with agencies on regulatory decisions has also been invited to share their experiences.

Tami Fordham, EPA

Tribal Government Representative (tentative)

10:45 BREAK

10:55 PARTNERING TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATION

DEC collaborated with six villages in the Yukon-Koyukuk watershed to develop a guide to improve communication and coordination between DEC and tribes during wastewater permitting and serve as a model for other tribes and communities. The resulting Communication Protocol was signed by DEC Commissioner Larry Hartig and the First Chief of each of the six participating villages. Mr. Mountain, Nulato Tribal Council, will describe the involvement of the villages and meaning of the project.

Paul Mountain, Nulato Tribal Council Administrator

Miriah Twitchell, APDES Local and Tribal Government Coordinator

11:15 THE DEC AND YUKON-KOYUKUK TRIBAL COMMUNICATION PROTOCOL

We will explore the Communication Protocol, its elements, and importance.

Miriah Twitchell, APDES Local and Tribal Government Coordinator

11:35 ELEMENTS OF THE PROTOCOL EXERCISE

12:00 LUNCH

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1:15 THE TRIBAL GOVERNMENT PARTICIPATION IMPLEMENTATION PROCEDURE

The collaborative work of the YK partner tribes and DEC paved the way for a procedure to inform and involve tribes statewide that have potential to be affected by a proposed wastewater permitting action. We'll examine the draft procedures and its logistics, and explore ways to facilitate effectiveness.

Miriah Twitchell, APDES Local and Tribal Government Coordinator

2:15 MEANINGFUL ENGAGEMENT – HOW EARLY TRIBAL NOTIFICATIONS CAN BE EFFECTIVE

We will work in small groups through an example excerpt of a proposed wastewater discharge application to identify components that provide meaningful information to tribes and draft an effective Early Tribal Notification letter. We also examine when, why, and how these notifications are provided.

2:45 BREAK

2:55 RESPONDING EFFECTIVELY – HOW TRIBES AND PERMIT WRITERS CAN WORK TOGETHER

We will work in small groups through example responses to Early Tribal Notification letters, identify ways in which tribes can most effectively convey information for consideration by DEC, and explore potential ways information provided by tribes can be addressed.

3:25 INTERACTIONS DURING PERMITTING – THE RULES WE LIVE BY

We will review the document titled 'APDES Guidance for Communicating During Permit Development' to facilitate a clear understanding of when specific types of conversations are best had.

Theresa Svancara, APDES Program Development Manager

Sharon Morgan, Water Quality Programs Manager

3:40 BREAK

3:50 DEVELOPING SOUND PERMITS – COORDINATION IS KEY

We will explore how early and effective coordination with tribes and agencies refined and shaped development of a specific draft Alaska Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit, how coordination benefited both the permitting process and stakeholders, and ways to facilitate effective coordination.

Miriah Twitchell, APDES Local and Tribal Government Coordinator

4:10 OVERVIEW, QUESTIONS

4:20 CLOSURE